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ABSTRACT

Examined in the first report is the need for educational improvement in higher education in Louisiana. Discussion focuses on the state of the economy: half of Louisiana's economy (production and manufacturing) is in decline, while the other half (production jobs) is uncertain. Cooperation between higher education and business offers hope for the future. Included in the document is the Louisiana Association of Business and Industry's Quality Thrust Endowment Fund Proposal. The second report addresses the need for Louisiana to restructure its economy through the educational system, specifically by regrading educational programs at all levels. An action agenda for the elementary and secondary levels is presented to upgrade the instructional program; improve teacher preparation, performance, and pay; and promote leadership, planning, management and public involvement. Revamping the state's method of funding is suggested, and an action agenda directed toward vocational-technical education is also emphasized. Educators, parents, business, labor, and public officials are urged to meet this challenge. (BJD)

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PREPARING FOR THE '90s

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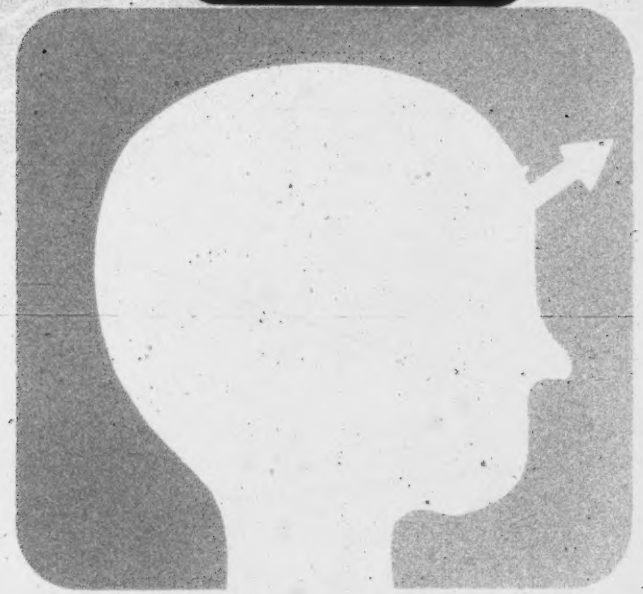

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THRUST FOR QUALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Preparing For The '90s

Thrust For Quality In Higher Education

This is the first in a two-part series on
A Quality Thrust In Education
prepared by
The Louisiana Association of Business and Industry

October 1983

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"The economic status of Louisiana's people has been restrained throughout this century by the educational handicaps of its people."

A Century of Educational, Political and Economic Retardation

The economic status of Louisiana's people has been restrained throughout this century by the educational handicaps of its people. Those educational handicaps have had a negative impact on the productivity of the people, on the political and social stability of the people and, therefore, on the overall attractiveness of the political climate for industrial and business location and expansion.

Though Louisiana has been blessed with more bountiful natural resources than any other state, too many of its people have remained poor. Louisiana's great natural resources have lifted the state off the floor, but not very far.

The political volatility in Louisiana throughout the '30s, '40s, '50s, '60s and half of the '70s never allowed the state to take much advantage of the economic value of its natural resources. And it was a red flag to nonnatural resources manufacturing, signaling that Louisiana was not the best place to go. Industry had long been the whipping boy in this educationally handicapped, populist-dominated state.

Though Louisiana has been undergoing a positive political evolution for about a generation, the most dramatic changes have occurred during the past 10 years as the economic leadership intervened to bring balance and stability to Louisiana politics. And those changes have been accompanied by a dramatic improvement in economic growth. But a new challenge lies ahead, because many of Louisiana's natural resources are beginning to play out.

Major decisions must be made now to chart the future course of Louisiana's economy, for it must undergo major changes. Surely the futility of past mistakes will help guide Louisiana in these decisions. No longer can the state afford its traditional low emphasis on quality and quantity of education, for clearly that is at the root of more of its handicaps than any other factor.

"Major decisions must be made now to chart the future course of Louisiana's economy, for it must undergo major changes."

LABI's analysis of the past, the present and its estimate of the future have produced the conclusion that its top priority for the foreseeable future must be *a quality thrust in education* for two reasons:

"LABI's . . . top priority for the foreseeable future must be a quality thrust in education."

1) *Quality research and quality higher education are absolutely necessary if Louisiana is to to get in step and keep pace with its competition in the information age hat we have entered.*

2) *The greatest potential for personal growth and for the state's economic growth lies in the greater refinement of its undereducated human resources.*

These dual thrusts of "Preparing for the '90s" will be examined in two reports. This report deals with the need for a "Quality Thrust in Higher Education." The second will deal with educational quality at all other levels.

Half of Louisiana's Economy in Decline

One-half of Louisiana's $60 billion economy – the half based on the production and manufacturing of petroleum products – is in an inevitable decline. A major shift in the economic base of the state is necessary if the economy is to continue the rapid growth of the past decade.

Indeed, a major change in its economic base must occur soon if it is even to grow at all.

This may come as shocking news to some who have witnessed the near phenomenal economic growth in Louisiana the past several years:

- Louisiana ranks 10th in the U.S. in job growth for the past five years (1978-83) with 11.7 percent, nearly three times the U.S. average of 4.4 percent.

- Louisiana's per capita income increased 180 percent in the past decade, ranking second in the nation, only slightly behind Wyoming's 200 percent.

- Louisiana's per capita income jumped from 77 percent of the U.S. average in 1970 to 92 percent in 1982.

- While Louisiana's ranking among states in per capita income dropped from 39th to 46th between 1950 and 1970, it has since rebounded to 31st in 1982.

If that pace could be continued for another half dozen years, Louisiana would match the national per capita income. But that probably won't happen.

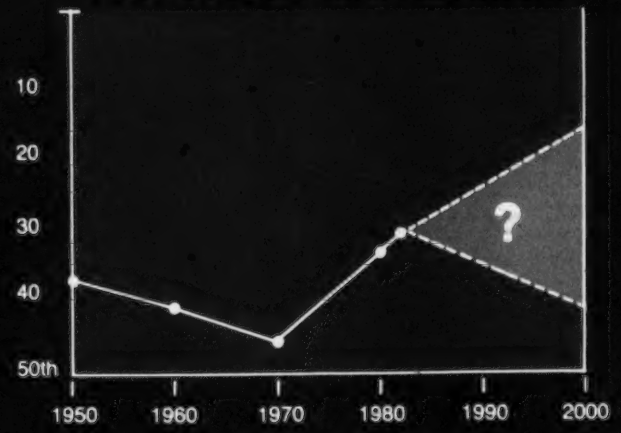
Considering the educational handicaps of Louisiana's population (Louisiana ranked 41st in the nation

INCREASE IN PER CAPITA INCOME, 1970-1980*

1.	Wyoming	200%
2.	**LOUISIANA**	
3.	Oklahoma	175
4.	Alaska	173
5.	North Dakota	172
6.	Texas	170
7.	Kansas	163
8.	Mississippi	161
9.	Arkansas	158
10.	Colorado	158
11.	Alabama	158
12.	New Mexico	157
13.	South Dakota	156
14.	Oregon	152
15.	Virginia	152
16.	Washington	152
17.	West Virginia	152
18.	Minnesota	139
19.	Wisconsin	146
20.	Tennessee	147
21.	Kentucky	147
22.	Iowa	146
23.	South Carolina	145
24.	Michigan	144
25.	Montana	144
26.	Nebraska	144
27.	Florida	143
28.	Idaho	143
29.	Georgia	143
30.	California	142
	U.S. AVERAGE	141
31.	North Carolina	141
32.	Maryland	140
33.	Arizona	139
34.	Pennsylvania	139
35.	New Hampshire	138
36.	Indiana	138
37.	Utah	138
38.	Ohio	137
39.	Missouri	135
40.	Connecticut	135
41.	Rhode Island	134
42.	Maine	132
43.	Massachusetts	132
44.	Illinois	132
45.	New Jersey	132
46.	Nevada	129
47.	Delaware	123
48.	Vermont	122
49.	New York	119
50.	Hawaii	119

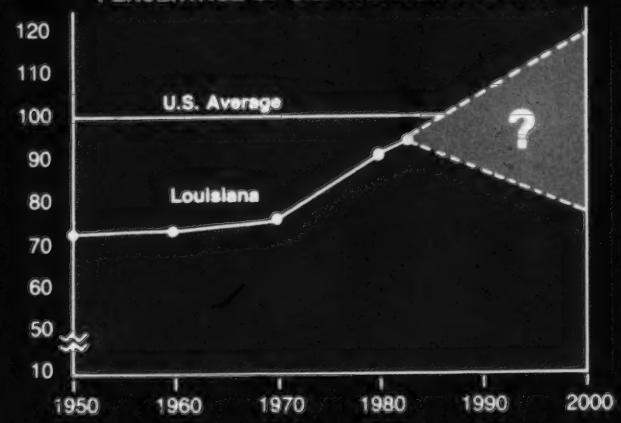
*Based on data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

LA. RANK IN PER CAPITA INCOME, 1950-2000*



*Based on data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

LOUISIANA'S PER CAPITA INCOME AS A PERCENTAGE OF U.S. AVERAGE 1950-2000*



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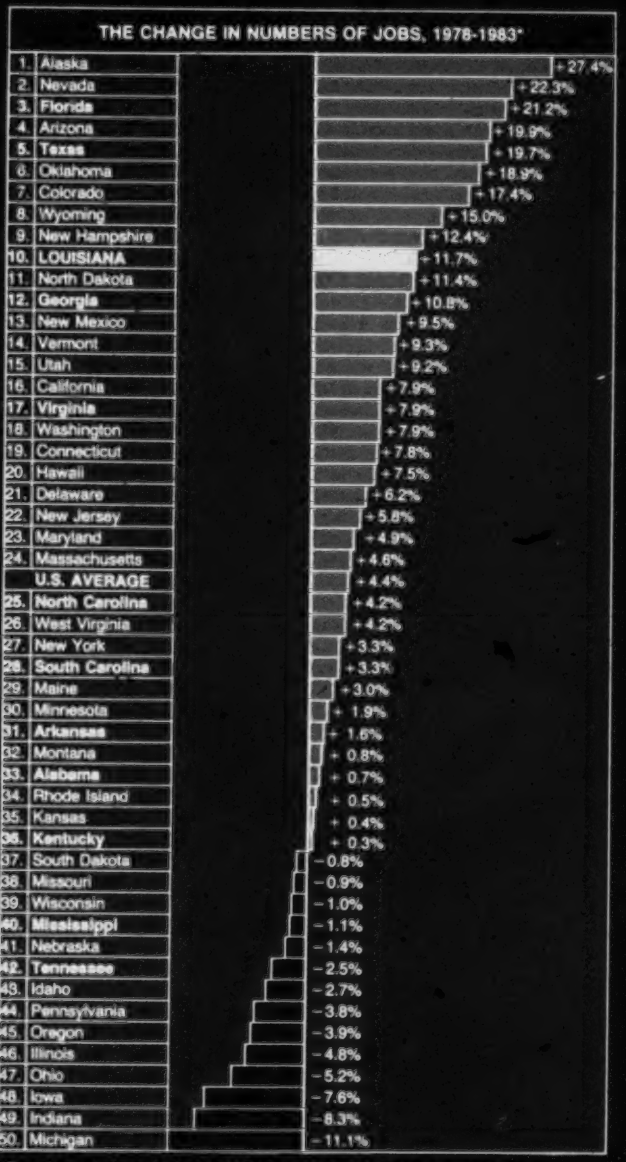


*Based on a table published in *U.S. News & World Report*, copyrighted 1983, June 13, 1983, p. 13.

in the number of adults completing high school with a completion rate of 57.7 percent in 1980 as compared to the U.S. average of 66.5 percent), it is amazing that any gains have been made. Louisiana's rich natural-resources-based economy, together with unusual industrial expansion spurred on by a much-improved political climate and image, have combined to undergird the growth of the past decade, despite the lower education levels.

But there can be little hope that such growth can continue, at least not for the long term, without a major change in the state's economic base.

That half of Louisiana's economic base which is made up of petroleum production and petroleum manufacturing offers little hope of supporting as much of the state's economy as it has the past two decades. It reached its zenith in 1981 and will never return to that level again. Rather, it faces an inevitable decline with perhaps a few blips on its descent.

In July 1981, a total of 97,700 workers were employed in oil and gas production. Another 48,700 were employed in chemical manufacturing and oil refining. These two groups constitute about 35 percent of the total basic production jobs in Louisiana's economy (numbering some 430,000), with most of the remainder employed in forestry, agriculture, fishing, nonpetroleum manufacturing and deep water transportation. The payrolls, however, for the workers in the petroleum sector have accounted for about 50 percent of the payrolls for all nonagricultural production jobs that fuel Louisiana's economy.

In July 1983, 89,300 were employed in oil and gas production and 42,900 in chemical manufacturing and petroleum refining. Thus, already in less than two years there has been a decline of 14,200 in petroleum production and manufacturing, and there's more to come. Petroleum production is little more than half

what it was 10 years ago. Chemical manufacturing is shifting to Saudi Arabia, Mexico, Canada and other countries where raw material and labor costs are but a fraction of the cost in the United States. Much, if not most, of the growth in the years ahead is certain to go abroad. Indeed, most of the major investments in such foreign chemical plants have been by American oil and chemical companies.

The Other Half Is Uncertain

Unfortunately, the other half of production jobs will probably not grow fast enough, even in the short-term, to take up the slack caused by the decline in the petroleum-related half.

Both the forest industry and agriculture, while increasing moderately in total output, will show a decline in jobs due to advanced technology.

Fishing, in which Louisiana already ranks No. 1 in the U.S., offers subtantial opportunity for growth. If more processing plants were developed here instead of processing so much of our fish in Alabama, Florida and other states, and if better market research provided greater incentives to increase production, Louisiana's economy would reap the benefits of increased production and processing.

In the nonpetroleum production sector, manufacturing offers the best opportunity in the short-term for keeping Louisiana's forward march going. The recent workers' compensation reform legislation removed labor-intensive industry's greatest objection to locating in Louisiana. An aggressive effort to recruit such industry – which for the past generation located everywhere else in the sunbelt, but minimally in Louisiana – should today pay off.

The Mississippi River, long Louisiana's greatest natural resource, should be a source of economic growth through expansion of shipping through its deep water ports – if they are kept competitive and are properly marketed.

Higher Education-Business Marriage Offers Hope

Another potential opportunity for economic growth in the immediate future lies in nurturing new, small businesses and sustaining them in their early years. For example, the existing technical know-how and skills of the people in those parishes that face gradual decline in energy-related jobs (Acadiana and the Mississippi Corridor especially) can be the source of a substantial boost in new enterprises. But it will require a marriage of the business leadership, new and old, and the higher educational institutions that can provide the marketing, management and financial skills that new businesses require.

About half the universities in Louisiana have already established Economic Development Centers in response to the hunger for help from budding entrepreneurs. These centers have the potential for cataloging and coordinating the wide range of resources already available to help small businesses get started and to teach them the skills they need to survive and grow. Small business and higher education need each other today as never before, a fact of which both are becoming increasingly aware.

If this marriage can occur now and prove its economic worth, then higher education will have a strong and aggressive constituency to help plead its case for meeting the tremendous long-term challenge it faces in providing leadership in the information age.

The absolute necessity of quality higher education and innovative research and development has become clearer and clearer for a generation as our

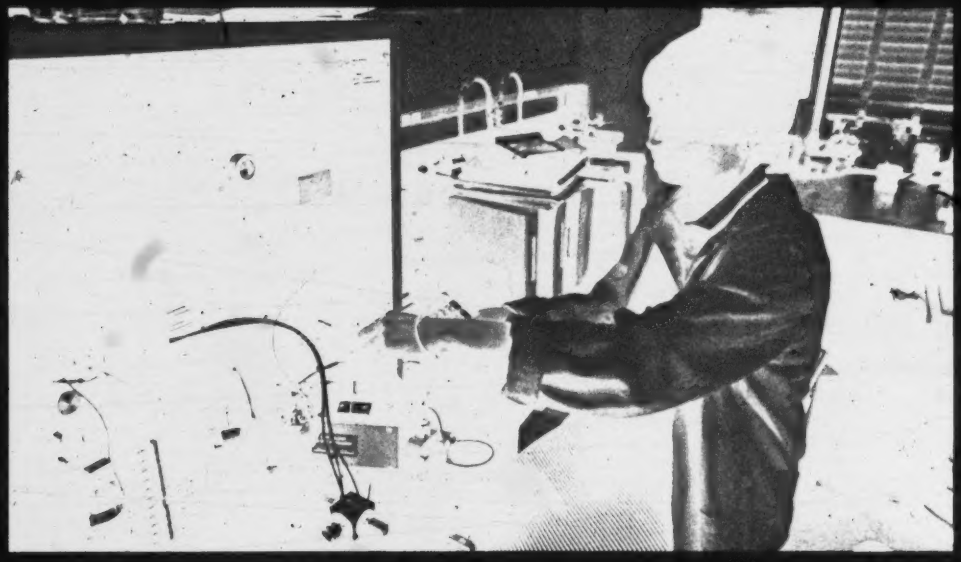
"In the nonpetroleum production sector, manufacturing offers the best opportunity in the short-term for keeping Louisiana's forward march going."

nation and world have plummeted headlong into the information age – an age for which Louisiana is grossly unprepared.

"The enormous technological advances ... and the solid and sustained growth in productivity which America experienced during the 25 years from 1948-1973 ... have clearly come from two factors: advances in knowledge (research and development) and education."

Quality Research and Education Produced America's Post WW II Growth

The enormous technological advances our nation has made since World War II and the solid and sustained growth in productivity which America experienced during the 25 years from 1948-1973 are today clearly documented as having come primarily from two factors: advances in knowledge (research and development) and education, with research and development ranked No. 1 and education No. 2. All other factors combined account for no more than one-third of America's productivity growth during that period.



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In the period from 1973 to 1980, there was a 20 percent decline in the proportion of the gross national product invested in research and development. In that same period, America showed zero productivity growth. Research and development made no contribution to growth, while education was the only positive factor of growth during this latter period.

Even though national commissions and task forces have focused on the dangerously low levels of quality in public education, America, year after year, has had an increasingly literate people. True, the *quality* of the product of public education is showing a decline or no improvement. At the same time the *quantity* is growing due to two factors:

- The dying population is vastly less well-educated than the emerging population that replaces them and
- More people are attending school longer.

In the United States in 1970, the number of adults who had completed high school was 52.3 percent. In 1980, it was 66.5 percent. In Louisiana, in 1970, the number of adults who had completed high school was 42.4 percent. In 1980, it was 57.7 percent. Similar advances have been experienced in the state and the nation for decades.

It is this ever-advancing "stock" or "inventory" of education of the American people that Dr. Theodore Schultz, Nobel prize-winning economist at the University of Chicago, 25 years ago concluded was the greatest contributing factor to America's economic leadership in the world.

However, to assure that our country and our state continue to move forward economically, we must concentrate on quality at all levels of our education system.

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Louisiana Behind in Knowledge Race

Today it is clear that, with computers escalating into new generations every four or five years and with knowledge doubling every four years or less, Louisiana has little hope of keeping pace economically – unless it becomes fully geared for the new information age.

Knowledge is already the principal product of our nation. It will be more so tomorrow. Those who find it first can gain the first fruits of it, and they will lead. Those who gain it later will be cast into the role of follower.

Knowledge frees man; ignorance enslaves him. As Jefferson said, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

Louisiana is not equipped for the information age, but it can become equipped. To do so will require a major commitment of resources, but first it demands agreement on what the highest priority should be.

California is equipped, as is Massachusetts, Texas and perhaps even North Carolina – because those states years ago placed a priority on the development of one or more of their universities to premier quality level – quality in instruction and quality in research.

While over 70 percent of the research and development carried out in the United States is performed by industry, as contrasted with less than 10 percent at universities, it should be remembered that industry's focus is on applied research and development, while the universities emphasize basic research. It is also the case that in the premier universities normally more than 50 percent of the faculty serve as paid consultants to private business, industry and government.

And during the past five years, there has occured a major increase in industry-university research through large and long-term agreements. This is particularly true in the fields of biotechnology, engineering, chemistry, semiconductors and electronics. The growing interaction of creative minds on and off campus has produced a fermenting intellectual environment and a greater understanding between industry and the university, considered more and more to be a healthy and productive relationship for the future. Out of this relationship, directly or indirectly, already have come many of the ideas for new products emerging from the so-called high technology field.

"Knowledge is already the principal product of our nation. It will be more so tomorrow."

Louisiana still has a chance to get into this knowledge race if it acts now, because Louisiana still has a greater per capita value of natural resources to help support its entry and to sustain its involvement than all except perhaps the sparsely populated states of Wyoming and Alaska.

Top Priority: Quality Thrust in Higher Education

Louisiana must make a commitment now to shift its focus from the development of natural resources to the development of human resources. The future of the state's economy rests largely with its educational system.

Arguments can be made for placing greatest emphasis at the elementary and secondary level, at the postsecondary vocational level, at the baccalaureate level in higher education and at the graduate level in higher education. All need further enhancement and the problems and potentials at all levels need to be addressed simultaneously.* Clearly, Louisiana is headed in the wrong direction when so much of its higher education energy is consumed in remedial programs. In 1982 a staggering 46 percent of new freshmen in Louisiana public institutions of higher education were enrolled in remedial programs. This should be phased down as soon as possible, and admission standards should be considered instead at least at some universities if Louisiana is to develop a higher education system with a quality thrust throughout.

But the urgency of the times demands that an immediate and major commitment be made now at the doctoral and postdoctoral level where the advances in knowledge can take place to help Louisiana compete in the knowledge-based high-technology race already underway. If this is accomplished, Louisiana can not only become a producer in the information age, but its quality product will stimulate a higher quality product at all stages of education below. That will benefit every man, woman and child in Louisiana.

LABI calls upon Louisiana's political leadership to demonstrate its commitment to this goal by allocating no less than $50 million a year to a Quality Thrust Endowment Fund in higher education. If that commitment is made and implemented, LABI – which represents the owners, producers and managers of Louisiana's economy – pledges to take the lead in developing major private contributions to the Quality Thrust Endowment Fund.

The pursuit of this goal will take precedence over every other objective on LABI's agenda for the foreseeable future.

** Part II of the Quality Thrust in Education, to be published soon, will discuss LABI's commitment to strengthening all other levels of education in Louisiana.*

LABI'S QUALITY THRUST ENDOWMENT FUND PROPOSAL

Goal:

To build a higher education system in Louisiana in the shortest time possible that will help provide the research and that can develop the researchers needed to place Louisiana in a leadership role in the nation in meeting the many new and varied challenges inherent in an ever-escalating explosion of knowledge and the resultant economic, political and social changes.

Rationale:

Either Louisiana must move to the forefront in research and development or it will fall further and further behind as it scrambles in frustration trying to cope with the vast changes brought about by the new knowledge developed by others.

How To Finance It:

The state should commit a minimum of $50 million each year in revenues from bonuses from natural resources leases to a Quality Thrust Endowment Fund to be used solely to help support:

- *Carefully defined research efforts;*
- *The endowment of chairs;*
- *The upgrading of certain departments considered critical for the building of a premier university or consortium of universities;*
- *The recruitment of clearly superior students at the graduate level; and*
- *Other special research and development efforts determined essential to preparing Louisiana people to cope with and lead in the age of information.*

Additional fundraising efforts through private sources should be conducted by each public and private university for the same or similar purposes.

Management Of The Thrust Fund:

A blue-ribbon board, appointed by the governor, and of the caliber of the National Science Foundation Board of Trustees, should be created from among the premier scientists and other leaders in Louisiana to advise a chief executive officer in administration of the thrust fund and to monitor expenditures from the fund from year to year to assure that its purposes and goals are carried out.

To assure minimum delay in reaping benefits of this effort, a portion of the capital in the fund should be allocated to carry out the quality thrust objectives in the first few years; but as the fund grows, only the earnings on the endowment funds should be used annually.

None of these monies should be available for use by any institution of higher education to replace normal operating funds. The quality thrust funds should be used exclusively as supplements to the quality level each institution is able to develop through the normal appropriation process.

Rekindling Our Pursuit of Knowledge

Not every Louisiana university has the potential to attain premier status. However, all those with strong doctoral programs should have those strong programs considered as a base on which to build Louisiana's quest for quality. But even those colleges not considered for such funding should benefit by the quickened pace to be set by those participating in the Quality Thrust Program.

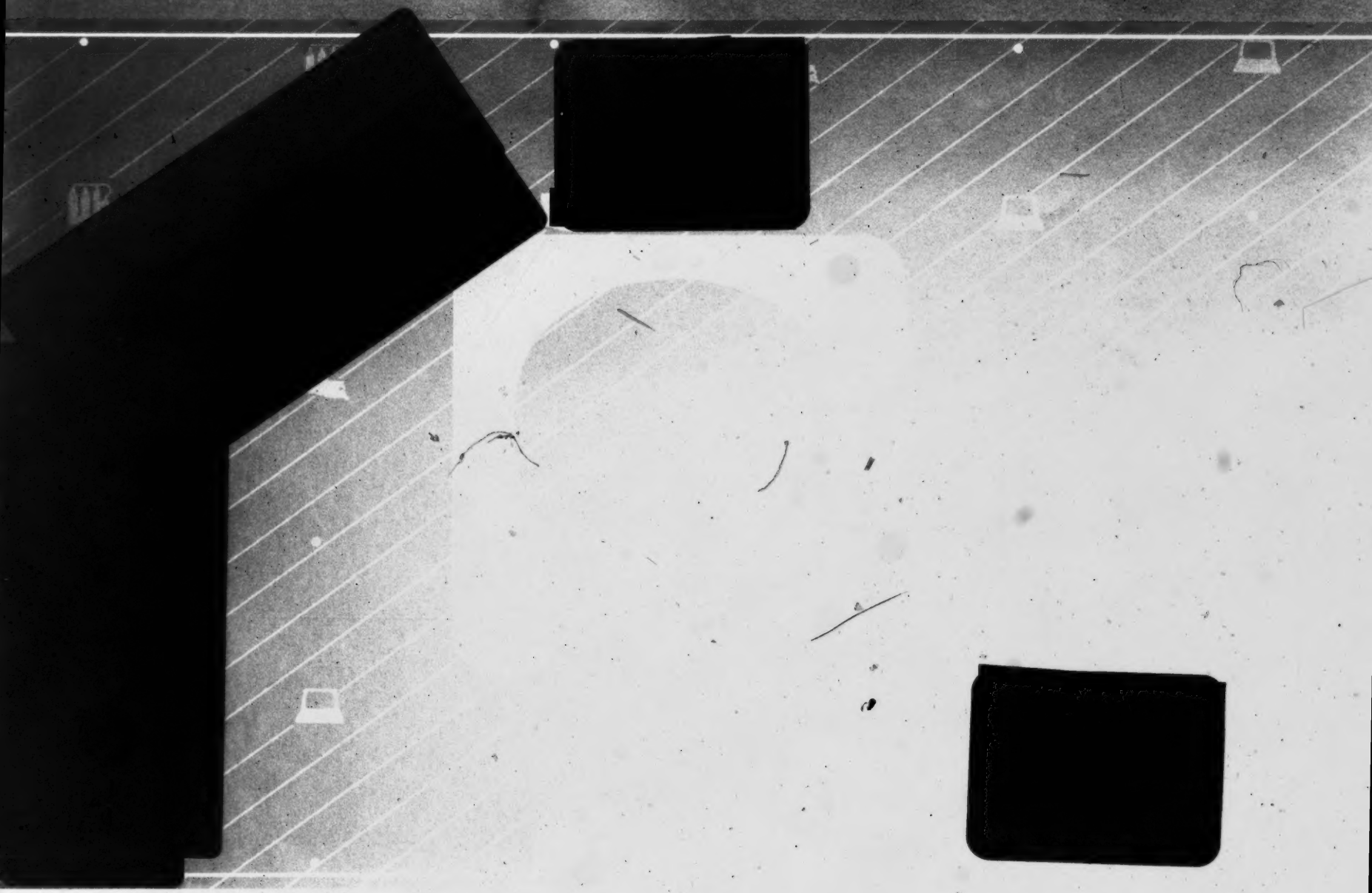
America is not dead or dying. It still leads the industrial world in overall technology and in productivity, though others are catching up fast.

There has been a wavering in our commitment to research and development and to education during the past decade. But the admonition of Jefferson and the history of our nation's growth should rekindle our faith in that which made our nation great – an insatiable pursuit of knowledge.

Acknowledgments

LABI would like to express its appreciation to the Louisiana Board of Regents, Louisiana State Department of Education and Louisiana State University for the use of the photos reproduced in this publication. We would also like to acknowledge Dr. James Robert Michael of Louisiana Tech University and the staff of U.S. News & World Report *for their assistance in the economic area.*

PREPARING FOR THE '90s



THRUST FOR QUALITY IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Preparing For The '90s

Thrust For Quality In Public Schools

This is the second in a two-part series on
A Quality Thrust In Education
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"The fate of the state's economy rests largely with its education system. And problems and potentials at all levels of that system clearly need to be simultaneously addressed."

Education: Problems and Potentials

Education is one of the major concerns of the people of Louisiana today, and their concern has been echoed by numerous national commissions in recent months which have called for far-reaching educational reforms – many of which are already in progress in Louisiana.

The National Commission on Educational Excellence has observed that "the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people."

Just as this national commission has concluded that "our nation is at risk," so we in Louisiana must recognize that our state's economy is at risk. Not only is Louisiana faced with many of the education-related problems of the rest of the nation, but Louisiana also faces the need to restructure its economy.

It must move from a dependence on natural resource-related industries to those which will demand an even better-educated and better-trained work force, and it must commit the resources necessary to develop a higher education system which can equip Louisiana people to compete in the information age and serve as a catalyst for new industrial development and jobs.

Thus the fate of the state's economy rests largely with its education system. And problems and potentials at all levels of that system clearly need to be simultaneously addressed. However, the urgency of the times demands that a substantial commitment of resources be made to research at the higher education level.

Upgrading Educational Programs At All Levels

"Louisiana has been ahead of many states in the country in implementing educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of instruction."

In addition to a top priority emphasis on higher education,* Louisiana also must strive for excellence at *all* levels of its educational system.

In recent years, Louisiana has been ahead of many states in the country in implementing educational reforms aimed at improving the quality of instruction, such as:

- Establishing a competency-based education system, which included development of curriculum guides and basic skills tests;
- Requiring that candidates for teacher certification meet the highest passing scores in the country on the National Teacher Examinations (NTE);
- Developing an incentive-pay plan for teachers (PIPS) to encourage them to upgrade their skills;
- Implementing stronger certification requirements for school administrators (including a required internship);
- Setting academic requirements for entrance into teacher training programs;
- Increasing high school graduation requirements;
- Changing the way local school boards and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) are elected to make their members more accountable;
- Conducting a comprehensive review of degree programs at Louisiana colleges and universities; and
- Completing a $100 million expansion of the state's postsecondary vo-tech school system.

However, much remains to be done.

**For additional information, See Part I of this series "Thrust for Quality in Higher Education."*

Action Agenda At the Elementary and Secondary Level

Louisiana must continue to work toward educational excellence. At the top of the agenda should be steps to further strengthen the curricula and course requirements for high school graduation; to increase the achievement standards for promotion at all levels to prepare students for a more rigorous high school curriculum; to maintain high standards for teacher certification, including passage of the NTE; to upgrade teacher salaries through merit pay and by offering teachers the option of 12-month employment; and to recruit principals who are capable of being true instructional leaders.

Louisiana must also seek ways to inject competition and choice into its public school system because these can be two powerful forces for bringing about both improved educational opportunities for Louisiana students and increased community and parental support for public education.

Tackling these and other education issues will not be easy, particularly in light of the increasing demands of the technologically oriented information age, declining public confidence and support, and dwindling revenues. But the effort must be made, and Louisiana must meet the challenge to:

Upgrade the Instructional Program

The first order of business should be clarifying the mission of the public schools and relieving them of the ancillary social service functions they have been assigned over the years. In addition, Louisiana should:

(1) *Reevaluate the minimum standards and cut-off scores on the basic skills tests used in the state's competency-based education program and upgrade them.* A study done in one parish indicates that students who score at the 75 cut-off score level on the state's second grade math and reading tests can generally be expected to score at the eighth and tenth percentiles in math and reading, respectively, on the national norm-referenced Metropolitan Achievement Test.

"The first order of business should be clarifying the mission of the public schools and relieving them of the ancillary social service functions they have been assigned over the years."

(2) *Continue to upgrade high school graduation requirements.* At a minimum, the following should be required for high school graduation:

- *4 years of English* (specifically including English I, English II, English III and English IV);
- *3 years of Math* (specifically including Algebra I, Algebra II and Geometry);
- *3 years of Science* (specifically including at least Biology and Chemistry); and
- *3½ years of Social Science* (specifically including American History, World History, Civics and Free Enterprise).

The present practice of allowing substitution of watered-down or remedial courses for core courses should be prohibited.

(3) *Give special recognition to students who complete a more rigorous high school curriculum for college bound students* (such as that recommended by the Board of Regents) by affixing a special seal to their diplomas,

"The quality of instruction in Louisiana's public schools is only going to be as good as the teachers in the classrooms."

and encourage greater use of advanced college placement courses in Louisiana high schools through which high school students can earn college credit to give them a head start on a college degree.

(4) *Study further the recommendations of several national commissions that the school day and school year be lengthened, and at a minimum operate high schools on a seven-period rather than a six-period day.*

(5) *Place greater emphasis on computer literacy beginning at the early grade levels.*

(6) *Require more homework and instruction in study skills.*

(7) *Reexamine the math and science curricula and place increased emphasis on math and science education beginning at the early grade levels and particularly at the junior high/middle school level.*

(8) *Examine the possibility of prekindergarten programs particularly at elementary schools whose student bodies traditionally require a high degree of remediation in the early grades.*

(9) *Improve the retention of students in high school.* Recent national statistics indicate Louisiana ranks 49th among the states in the percentage of high school freshmen who go on to get a high school diploma.

(10) *Reexamine the state's emphasis on special education and assure that these services are not provided to the detriment of regular education students.*

Improve Teacher Preparation, Performance and Pay

The quality of instruction in Louisiana's public schools is only going to be as good as the teachers in the classrooms.

Thus Louisiana should:

(1) *Upgrade teacher training programs and tie their approval to their ability to produce graduates who can meet Louisiana's certification requirements.* Over the past four years, almost half (47 percent) of the graduates of Louisiana's public colleges of education have failed to meet the state's certification requirements; the percentage has ranged from a high

of 96 percent failing at one institution to a low of 12 percent failing at another. At least one state, Florida, has begun decertifying teacher training programs if 20 percent or more of their graduates fail to pass the state's test for teacher certification.

(2) Retain the use of the National Teacher Examinations (NTE) for teacher certification and consider giving part of the test as an entrance requirement for teacher training programs.

(3) Require periodic recertification of teachers in lieu of the present lifetime teaching certificates, and improve supervision and support systems for beginning teachers.

(4) Upgrade teacher pay through a comprehensive and coordinated compensation policy which makes salaries in the teaching profession competitive with other fields, rewards performance, provides career ladders, offers teachers the option of 12-month employment, continues to provide incentives for professional development through the Professional Improvement Program (PIPS), and takes into consideration the length of the contract year, as well as employee benefits (such as free college tuition, insurance, retirement and sabbatical and other leave).

(5) Give teachers time to teach by reducing paper work and improving support systems, including greater use of technological advances to improve classroom management.

(6) Support efforts to attract and retain qualified teachers (such as scholarships, differential pay for areas of critical shortage, and special training and/or certification programs for liberal arts graduates to teach at the secondary level).

(7) Strengthen certification requirements for middle school/junior high math and science teachers.

"At the state level, Louisiana must resolve the conflict and buck-passing which exists as a result of having two elected heads running its education system."

Improve Leadership, Planning, Management and Public Involvement

At the state level, Louisiana must resolve the conflict and buck-passing which exists as a result of having two elected heads running its education system – the state superintendent and the state Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) – neither of which is responsible to the other. At the local school system level, principals can be the key to

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effective schools, along with school-based management where parents, citizens, teachers, students and administrators jointly plan for school improvement at the school building level. To improve leadership, planning and management in its public schools, Louisiana should:

(1) Appoint either the state superintendent or the State Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and elect the other.

(2) Encourage strong policymakers committed to quality education to run for BESE and local school board seats and require in-service training.

(3) Increase emphasis on research and planning, possibly by providing incentive grants for school improvement which would be awarded on a competitive basis.

(4) Recruit principals who are capable of being instructional leaders and hire them on the basis of a performance contract, phasing out tenure in administrative positions but allowing administrators to retain tenure they may have gained as teachers. In addition, intensive training for school administrators should be provided.

(5) Explore the use of school site councils as a mechanism for getting the community and educators to work together for educational excellence at the school building level.

(6) Implement a state school and system accreditation process to be coordinated by the State Department of Education to assure compliance with BESE policies and state and federal laws.

Revamp the State's Method of Funding Education

The present formula for allocating state funds to local school systems is so complicated and inflexible that it is probably safe to say that there are not 100 people in the state who really understand it. Louisiana should:

(1) Move to a pupil-based formula for allocating state funds to local school systems and allow a greater degree of flexibility in how those funds can be spent. The formula should have an equalizing effect, in compliance with state and federal constitutional requirements, and should compensate for those instances in which parishes do not have sufficient wealth to tax (even if they make the maximum effort) in order to provide an adequate instructional program.

(2) Give local school systems greater authority and responsibility to raise funds locally.

(3) Follow up on recommendations of the Governor's Cost Control Commission aimed at cutting unnecessary costs in the educational system, such as the excessive amounts spent on school bus transportation.

(4) Limit state financing of education to the instructional program and not capital improvements, which have traditionally been the responsibility of local school systems.

(5) Provide incentives for better management and improved instructional programs. Some states have instituted programs providing monetary incentives for successfully solving education-related problems or coming up with better ways of delivering services.

Action Agenda At the Vocational-Technical Education Level

Although Louisiana has invested more than $100 million in the expansion of its postsecondary vo-tech schools, it still does not have an administrative structure which permits the system to respond to present and future manpower needs. In fact, Louisiana does not really have a vo-tech "system"; it has 53 independent schools. The state should:

(1) Clarify the policymaking and administrative responsibilities of BESE and the State Department of Education in the operation of the vo-tech system and require that the system be managed as a system. If these two agencies are incapable of reaching an agreement that BESE should be the policymaker and that the department should administer that policy, then consideration should be given to assigning the responsibility for the entire vo-tech system elsewhere.

(2) Institute a comprehensive assessment of program offerings in the state's postsecondary vo-tech schools based on job training needs.

(3) Develop sound, competency-based curricula in all program areas utilizing skilled employees in the field and employers in developing and updating curricula.

(4) Build more flexibility into the vo-tech system to allow it to respond more promptly to industry training needs.

(5) Push for better articulation between secondary and post secondary vo-tech programs.

(6) Institute research and data gathering needed to implement a management information system to aid in program evaluation and planning in the postsecondary vo-tech schools.

(7) Require that vo-tech school directors utilize the expertise of employees and employers through advisory councils and craft committees on an ongoing basis and encourage industry/vo-tech exchange programs.

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Meeting The Challenge

Ironically, both the United States and Louisiana have allowed public school achievement standards to deteriorate over the past generation, directly at odds with the needs of society as this nation moved from the industrial age where greater knowledge was less of a necessity to the information age where greater knowledge is absolutely essential. Numerous reasons have been given to explain why this happened. Among the most frequently mentioned are desegregation, a general revolt against authority, proliferation of electives, the shifting of parental responsibilities to schools due to more women moving into the workforce and the growing number of single-parent families. But whatever the reasons, we can no longer afford to hide behind excuses and tolerate less than the best for Louisiana students as they make their one trip through their 12 years of elementary and secondary school.

No more important mission faces Louisiana than the development of a consensus *now* among educators, parents, business, labor and public officials on how best to meet this crisis head-on no later than 1984. Whoever is elected governor must take the lead.

All involved must make a commitment to educational excellence and demonstrate a willingness to take the tough stands and fight the political battles that will be required to achieve it.

Louisiana must make the effort. The future of our state and its people is at stake.

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